

Message Text

SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

S E C R E T TANANARIVE 0155

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, MA

SUBJ: WORLD PEACE COUNCIL(WPC); GOMR EFFORTS TO FRUSTRATE POSSIBLE TANANARIVE MEETING BY HOLDING OTHER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

BEGIN SUMMARY: MALAGASY MFA HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY LOCAL WPC REPS WITH REQUEST THAT GOMR HOST MEETING TANANARIVE JUL74. MFA IS INVESTIGATING POSSIBILITIES OF HOSTING DIFFERENT INTERNATIONAL CONFER DURING APPROXIMATELY SAME PERIOD TO PREEMPT WPC MEETING OR ATTENUATE ITS INFLUENCE. ACTION REQUEST: INFO ON POSSIBILITY HOLDING OTHER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE MORE FRIENDLY TO WESTERN INTERESTS IN MID-1974. END SUMMARY.

1. MAIN PURPOSE MALAGASY MFA DIRECTOR BILATERAL RELATIONS RATSIMANDRESY'S REQUEST FOR DCM TO CALL 05FEB WAS TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF ORGANIZING SOME SORT OF NON-COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN TANANARIVE IN JUL74. HE IMMEDIATELY CAME TO POINT THAT INQUIRY, FROM MFA'S POINT OF VIEW, RELATES TO REQUEST EMANATING FROM OFFICE TANA MAYOR AND LEADING WPC PERSONALITY ANDRIAMANJATO THAT GOMR HOST WPC MEETING TANA IN JUL. GOMR HAS NOT YET REPLIED, RATSIMANDRESY SAID, AND APPARENTLY SECRET

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HOPES HOLD OFF ANSWER UNTIL EMBASSY PROVIDES INFO REQUESTED

PARA 5 BELOW.

2. DCM QUESTIONED WHETHER IT IS MFA'S DESIRE FOR SUGGESTED INTERNATIONAL CONFER TO PREEMPT POSSIBLE WPC MEETING. RATSIMANDRESY REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY, BUT THEN BACKTRACKED A LITTLE. HE SAID IF INTERNATIONAL CONFER COULD NOT BE ORGANIZED DURING EXACT SAME PERIOD WPC REPS TALKING ABOUT (FIRST HALF JUL), THEN IT COULD AT LEAST, IF HELD IN APPROXIMATELY SAME TIME FRAME, COUNTERBALANCE IMPRESSION AT HOME AND ABROAD THAT GOMR IS MORE INTERESTED IN PLEASING COMMUNIST STATES THAN IT IS IN STRENGTHENING OLD TIES WITH WEST. RATSIMANDRESY INDICATED HE WAS BROACHING SUBJECT WITH EMBASSY ONLY AFTER GETTING GO-AHEAD FROM FONMIN RATSIRAKA. SEVERAL TIMES DURING DISCUSSION RATSIMANDRESY SAID IT IS SERIOUS MISTAKE FOR LOCAL LEFTISTS OR OUTSIDERS TO BELIEVE FONMIN RATSIRAKA IS PRO-COMMUNIST ON BASIS OF CURRENT GOMR POLICY OF OPENING TO EAST. MAYOR ANDRIAMANJATO'S AKFM IS MERELY ATTEMPTING EXPLOIT SUCH POLICY FOR ITS OWN SELFISH ENDS, HE REITERATED.

3. RATSIMANDRESY SAID IT MATTERS LITTLE WHAT KIND OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE MIGHT BE HELD HERE AS LONG AS IT IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY FRENCH OR COMMUNIST ORGANIZED AND DOMINATED. SAID HE WAS THINKING IN TERMS OF SCIENTIFIC OR TECHNICAL CONFERENCE. DCM COMMENTED THAT IT WOULD SEEM VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO ORGANIZE SUCH CONFER WITH SO LITTLE TIME REMAINING BUT PROMISED TO LOOK INTO MATTER.

4. TANA'S CAPACITY TO HOST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IS OBVIOUSLY LIMITED BUT CONSIDERABLY BETTER THAN IN MANY LDC CAPITALS. EMBASSY ESTIMATES FOUR FIRST-CLASS HOTELS (HILTON, COLBERT, AGIP AND PANORAMA) HAVE TOTAL 394 ROOMS AND SUITES. SEVERAL OTHER HOTELS HAVE CONSIDERABLE SPACE MEETING ACCEPTABLE THOUGH LOWER THAN FIRST-CLASS WESTERN STANDARDS. ALL HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY UNDERUTILIZED SINCE MAY72 EVENTS, AND PRESUMABLY IT WOULD NOT BE TOO DIFFICULT TO ACCOMMODATE MEDIUM-SIZE SCIENTIFIC OR TECHNICAL CONFERENCE DURING JUL PROVIDED GOVT ATTACHES HIGH PRIORITY TO CONFER SUGGESTED BY RATSIMANDRESY. HILTON HAS ADEQUATE SPACE FOR MEETINGS. THERE ARE NO SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING SYSTEMS AVAILABLE LOCALLY, BUT PRESUMABLY ONE COULD BE HIRED. NUMBER OF TAXIS, ALSO UNDERUTILIZED, SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT.

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5. ACTION REQUEST: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE INFO FROM ACTION ADDRESSEES ON WHETHER OR NOT THERE IS ANY POSSIBILITY APPROPRIATE SCHEDULED OR TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES ARE LOOKING FOR A HOST DURING FIRST HALF OF JUL74 OR REASONABLY SHORTLY THEREAFTER. EMBASSY WILL BE GLAD ATTEMPT PROVIDE ANY SUPPLEMENTARY INFO REQUIRED. PLEASE ADVISE.
MENDENHALL

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NNN

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